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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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8TH ANNUAL CHARLEY PELL CLASSIC

*Golf enthusiasts and mental health advocates will tee-off to promote awareness
about mental illness*

MONTGOMERY – Golf enthusiasts and mental health advocates will tee-off at the 8th Annual Charley Pell Classic Friday, September 26, 2008, at Ol' Colony Golf Course in Tuscaloosa. The tournament was established in honor of football player and collegiate coaching great, Charley Pell, and promotes awareness about mental illness and other services provided by the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation. Tournament registration and lunch starts at 11 a.m. and a shotgun start will begin at 12 p.m. Coach Pell's widow and honorary tournament chair, Ward Pell, and other officials will also be on hand for the event. There will be an awards ceremony following play. Proceeds from the tournament will be used to further Charley Pell's message of hope and encouragement to people facing the challenges of a mental illness.

Coach Pell was a member of the University of Alabama's undefeated national championship football team in 1961, and during his coaching legacy built three national championship programs at Jacksonville State University, Clemson University, and the University of Florida. Both the ACC and the SEC conferences named him "Coach of the Year." Following a brilliant coaching career, Coach Pell progressively experienced profound depression and eventually attempted suicide. In his recovery, he became an advocate for people who have experienced a mental illness. He served on the Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation Advisory Board of Trustees until his death in May of 2001.

The Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation was recently cited as an award recipient in the National Voice Awards (<http://allmentalhealth.samhsa.gov/voiceawards/>) for its documentary film *The Legacy of Coach Charley Pell*. The 17-minute film is narrated by sportscaster Herb Winches of Birmingham, Alabama and Ward Pell of Gadsden. The department has *The Legacy of Coach Charley Pell* on its Web site at www.mh.alabama.gov, in the Media Center. Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation Commissioner John Houston said, "We are very proud of receiving an Honorable Mention Citation in the Voice Awards. We had to compete in the 'entertainment industry' category whose recipients include programs like 'Law and Order' and 'Monk.' Coach Pell's story delivers a powerful and compelling message and that substantive element makes the film unforgettable."

Individuals may register the day of the tournament. For more information about the 8th annual Charley Pell Classic or the documentary *The Legacy of Coach Charley Pell*, contact the department at (334) 242-3417.

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